

We need the “Big Story” of the world before we can begin to make sense of any part of our lives. Genesis gives us the big story that helps us make sense of God, our world and our lives in relationship to God and His world. Genesis is the ultimate origins story.

A. A Little Bit About Genesis.

- i. *The Name:* Genesis means ‘Beginnings’ or ‘Origins.’
 - A. Genesis tells us about the beginning of everything but God.
- ii. *The Author:* Jewish and Christian tradition are virtually unanimous in ascribing it to Moses.
 - A. Jesus (the interpretive key to all of Scripture) ascribes Genesis, and the Torah to Moses. Mt. 8:4; Jn. 5:46
- iii. *The Date:* Around 1400BC.
 - A. Moses writes Genesis as Israel is making their way out of Egypt (c.1445BC) but before Moses’ death (c.1405BC).

B. The Shape of Genesis

- i. *Four Incredibly Important Moments (chs. 1-11)*
 - A. The Creation (chs. 1-2): The Creation account answers the questions of “Who is God and Who Am I in Relation to God?” In the Creation account we learn....
 - 1. There is a God (Gen. 1:1). He is self-existent, eternal, wise, sovereign, creative, relational and moral.
 - a. The Bible is primarily about God.
 - b. Secondly, it’s about us in relation to God and His creation.
 - 2. We are made in His Image (Gen. 1:26-28). We’re the pinnacle of His creation.
 - a. We’re made to reflect His image.
 - b. We’re to steward His creation. (Engage it, Enjoy it, but Don’t Exploit it).
 - c. We’re Made for Relationships. With the Lord, and with one-another. The highest form in this age is marriage.
 - B. The Fall (chs. 3-5): The Fall answers the questions of, “Why is the World the Way It Is, and Why Are We the Way We Are?” The Fall tells us...
 - 1. Our Ancient Parents Disobedience brought sin and a broken relationship with God into every subsequent life.
 - a. We’ve inherited a sin nature—a built in propensity to live independently of God *and* in defiance of His Word and Ways.
 - b. As well as the penalty of sin—Death.
 - C. The Flood (chs. 6-9): The Flood answers the questions of “Will God Judge Us and Is there a Way of Escape?”
 - 1. The virus of sin kept spreading and at an alarming rate. “The LORD saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time”
 - 2. The Lord was grieved and decides to bring wholesale judgment against the sin and start again.
 - 3. The one exception was Noah who had found God’s favor. How? By taking God at His Word and responding in faith. He builds a large vessel as the Lord instructed him.
 - 4. The Flood Waters Prevail: 7:16-23
 - D. The Dispersion (chs. 10-11): The Dispersion account answers the questions of, “Exactly How Arrogant Are We and Will We Ever Learn?”
 - 1. A unified humanity seeks to build their identity apart from God and a monument to their ingenuity while rejecting God’s command to fill the earth.

2. God is not pleased with their disobedience. In mercy, he confuses the languages and disperses the people over the face of the earth, to slow the spread of sin!
- ii. *Four Incredibly Important Men (chs. 12-50):* After focusing on the beginning of the human race, Moses turns his focus to the start of the chosen race from whom the Rescuer would come.
 - A. Abraham (chs. 12-23): God's Grace is Available.
 1. *The Promise:* God comes to Abram at Haran and makes a stunning promise. (Gen. 12:1-7). The promise is that through Abraham's offspring the Lord would build a nation, with their own land, and the Messiah would come from his line.
 2. *The Problem:* Abraham and Sarah were childless. The Lord reaffirms the promise (Gen. 15:5) and Abraham responds in faith (Gen. 15:6) and finally at the ripe old age of 100 Isaac is born.
 - B. Isaac (chs. 24-26): The Promises of God are Sure.
 1. Isaac is the promised son. His story with his father foreshadows another story between a Father and a Son, as the Lord instructs Abraham to sacrifice the promised Son, but at the last minute the Lord provides a substitute sacrifice.
 - C. Jacob (chs. 27-36): The Power of God is Transformative.
 1. His name can mean either cheater or deceiver.
 2. We're told how God transforms him from being a manipulative, selfish jerk, into a broken, contrite and humble man who the Lord mightily uses as he has 12 sons who become the 12 tribes of Israel.
 - D. Joseph (chs. 37-50): The Providence of God is Real.
 1. Joseph is the favored son who by God's design suffers unjustly but rises to prominence to forgive and save completely. Does that sound like someone else?
 2. Joseph sees God's hand of providence. He tells his brothers, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (Gen. 50:20).
- C. **Why Genesis? Why Now?** Here's why. You will live out of the story you believe in. You need a comprehensive story to believe in and live out of. Genesis provides it.
 - i. *Genesis Proclaims the True and Glorious Story of God:*
 - A. Genesis tells us that there is an eternal, holy being who has always existed in a loving triune relationship, and out of that love He created the universe and humanity to share in His love
 - B. Genesis makes sense of the past by proclaiming the true story of God.
 - ii. *Genesis Presents the True and Sad Story of Man:*
 - A. By willful choice humanity has been cut off from God and therefore the heart of man is continually bent inwards and profoundly evil.
 - B. Genesis makes sense of our present and why we see and experience joy and beauty and yet endure pain and frustration.
 - iii. *Genesis Points Forward to the Ultimate Redemption Story.*
 - A. The Serpent Slayer, the Seed of Abraham, the Son of Promise, the favored Son who suffers unjustly, but rises to forgive and save completely is none other than Jesus Christ.
 - B. Adam and Eve in a garden, plunge humanity into sin through disobedience, but it's in another Garden, the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus Christ, who Paul calls the 2nd Adam reverses the curse through His obedience even to the point of death and makes a way for you to be reconciled to God.
 - C. John in Revelation 21, gives us a vision of our future with Christ. Rev. 21:22-22:3.
 - D. Genesis makes sense of our past, gives meaning to our present experiences and provides tremendous hope for our future!